



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 21, 2014

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STATEMENT OF FCC COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI
DECRYING MOVE TO MAKE RURAL AMERICANS PAY ALMOST 50 PERCENT MORE
FOR PHONE SERVICE THAN THOSE LIVING IN WASHINGTON, DC

The data released late last Friday by the Federal Communications Commission's Wireline Competition Bureau show why the agency shouldn't increase rural Americans' phone bills.¹ The FCC's so-called "rate floor" is supposed to ensure that urban and rural rates are "comparable." But even though the Bureau's data reveal that the local phone rate in Washington, DC is \$14.10, the FCC is on the precipice of raising rates for rural Americans from \$14.00 to \$20.46. As a result, rural Americans will have to pay 45 percent *more* for local phone service than those living in our nation's capital. On top of all that, this rate increase will not save the government *any money*.

This issue is another example of why so many in our nation's heartland feel so alienated from Washington, DC. Too often, there is one set of rules for those inside the Beltway and another set of rules for everyone else. I hope the Commission will reconsider this ill-conceived policy and not raise rural Americans' phone bills to no end.

¹ See Wireline Competition Bureau, 2014 Urban Rate Voice Survey Methodology, <http://go.usa.gov/kRZJ> (Apr. 21, 2014); Wireline Competition Bureau, 2014 Urban Rate Voice Survey Results, <http://go.usa.gov/kRBY> (Apr. 21, 2014).